

What is claimed is:

1. An absorbent sanitary article for absorbing body fluids which comprises a matrix containing metallic silver, characterized in that the silver is present bound to a fiber (24) exclusively on the surface thereof.
2. An absorbent sanitary article according to claim 1, characterized in that the metallic silver is attached in depressions in the surface, especially hind-grippedly.
3. An absorbent sanitary article according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that the fiber (24) is a synthetic fiber, especially a synthetic fiber containing a polyamide, a polyester, a polyacrylic, an elastane or a polychloride.
4. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the fiber (24) is present in the form of a woven (18), in the form of a nonwoven or in the form of a thread.
5. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the fiber (24) has a silver content of not more than 3%.
6. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the silver content of the fiber (24) is just high enough to ensure that an antimicrobial effect is detectable on a first body contact surface (12) of the sanitary article for not more than 24 hours in particular.
7. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the metallic silver is present in the form of bound

particles from 1 to 30 nm, preferably from 1 to 10 nm and especially from 1 to 6 nm in diameter.

- 5 8. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the metallic silver fully surrounds the outer surface of the fiber (24).
- 10 9. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the fiber (24), the woven (18), the nonwoven or the thread is present within the sanitary article in piecewise disbursement.
- 15 10. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the fiber (24), the woven (18), the nonwoven or the thread is disposed within a layer of the sanitary article.
- 20 11. An absorbent sanitary article according to claim 10, characterized in that the layer is disposed closer to the first surface (12) of the sanitary article than to a second surface (14) which is not intended for body contact, especially  
25 closer to the first surface (12) than to the midpoint between the first surface (12) and the second surface (14).
- 30 12. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the sanitary article contains a pulp (20) and/or a superabsorbent (22).
- 35 13. An absorbent sanitary article according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the sanitary article is a disposable article.
14. An absorbent sanitary article according to any

preceding claim, characterized in that the  
sanitary article is a diaper, especially a pants-  
type diaper, a training pant, an incontinence pad  
or a feminine hygiene article, especially a  
5 sanitary napkin (10), a panty liner or a tampon  
(26).

15. A process for producing an absorbent sanitary  
article for absorbing body fluids which comprises  
10 a matrix containing metallic silver, which  
comprises the silver being bound to a fiber (24)  
exclusively on the surface thereof.

16. A process according to claim 15, wherein the  
15 silver is applied to the fiber (24) by electro,  
chemical or electrochemical deposition or by vapor  
deposition.

17. A process according to claim 15 or 16, wherein the  
20 silver is bound to the fiber (24) by means of a  
chemical or physical bond.

18. A process according to any of claims 15 to 17,  
wherein the metallic silver is attached in  
25 depressions in the surface, especially hind-  
grippedly.

19. A process according to any of claims 15 to 18,  
wherein the surface of the fiber (24) is mordanted  
30 prior to the binding of the silver.

20. A process according to any of claims 15 to 19,  
wherein the fiber (24) is a synthetic fiber,  
especially a synthetic fiber containing a  
35 polyamide, a polyester, a polyacrylic, an elastane  
or a polychloride.

21. A process according to any of claims 15 to 20,  
wherein the fiber (24) is incorporated in the

sanitary article in the form of a woven (18), in the form of a nonwoven or in the form of a thread.

- 5 22. A process according to any of claims 15 to 21, wherein the silver is applied up to a 3% silver content of the fiber (24).
- 10 23. A process according to any of claims 15 to 22, wherein the silver is only applied up to a silver content of the fiber (24) just high enough to ensure that an antimicrobial effect is detectable on a first body contact surface (12) of the sanitary article for not more than 24 hours in particular.
- 15 24. A process according to any of claims 15 to 23, wherein the metallic silver is bound in the form of particles from 1 to 30 nm, preferably from 1 to 10 nm and especially from 1 to 6 nm in diameter.
- 20 25. A process according to any of claims 15 to 24, wherein the metallic silver is applied such that the outer surface of the fiber (24) is fully surrounded by silver.
- 25 26. A process according to any of claims 15 to 25, wherein the fiber (24), the woven (18), the nonwoven or the thread is disbursed within the sanitary article in piecewise form.
- 30 27. A process according to any of claims 15 to 26, wherein the fiber (24), the woven (18), the nonwoven or the thread is disposed within a layer of the sanitary article.
- 35 28. A process according to claim 27, wherein the layer is disposed closer to the first surface (12) of the sanitary article than to a second surface (14) which is not intended for body contact, especially

closer to the first surface (12) than to the midpoint between the first surface (12) and the second surface (14).

- 5 29. A process according to any of claims 15 to 28, wherein a pulp (20) and/or a superabsorbent (22) is incorporated in the sanitary article.